

NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

A-1 Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi-110029

Press Release

Subject: Workshop in Gorakhpur on 6th August, 2011 regarding Flood Early Warning Framework and Japanese Encephalitis

Taking note of the vulnerabilities of the area to the floods and health related problems, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in coordination with The State Government of Uttar Pradesh is organizing a workshop in Eastern UP; at Gorakhpur focusing on Azamgarh, Basti, Devipattan and Gorakhpur Divisions on 6th August. The workshop will be inaugurated by Shri M Shashidhar Reddy Vice Chairman NDMA. This programme is part of countrywide initiative which the NDMA has launched to identify critical areas from the point of view of disaster vulnerability and initiate mitigation measures in partnership with the states and other stakeholders to minimize the loss of lives and property. This workshop will mainly focus on the following issues:

- I. Improved Flood Early Warning framework.
- II. Pilot Project on Strengthening Civil Defence.
- III. Issues related to Japanese Encephalitis.

Floods are recurring disaster in UP. As per National Commission on Floods, 23 percentage of the flood prone area of India is concentrated in Uttar Pradesh. Out of total losses due to flood in Uttar Pradesh, 60% are concentrated in Eastern Uttar Pradesh. The history of flooding in Eastern UP casts a dark shadow. For generations, floods have ravaged the lives and livelihoods of the inhabitants of this area with unrelenting regularity. The current trends show that we are witnessing greater flood problems in Eastern UP resulting towards higher degree of loss of lives and livelihoods. To overcome this calamity we have to adopt more proactive approach in management of floods rather than a reactive response to this disaster.

To this end Scientists from Indian Space Research Organisation, Indian Metrological Department and Engineers from Central Water Commission will familiarize the participants about flood forecasting and early warning systems and flood modeling. To galvanize the response mechanism a presentation on Incident Response System and an exhibition by National Disaster Response Force has also been organized

On the health front, to fight the epidemic of Japanese Encephalitis, there is a need to strengthen the surveillance, vaccination and public awareness programmes. According to country wide survey Uttar Pradesh is the worst affected State in the country. In the last five years against the average of 760 deaths per year in the entire country, Uttar Pradesh alone accounted for nearly 550 deaths per annum. Within Uttar Pradesh it is the Eastern UP which accounts for maximum fatalities. The districts of Gorakhpur, Mahrajganj, Deoria, Kushinagar, Basti, Siddharthanagar and Sant Kabir are the worst affected. NDMA along with Director National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme , Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Government of India and Representative from the World Health Organisation will review the Japanese Encephalitis programme .

Since community is the first responder, there is also a felt need to involve the community, people's representatives and civil defence establishment in the disaster management initiatives. It is proposed to strengthen the civil defence organization at Gorakhpur and launch a pilot project to revitalize and further train the Volunteers to generate awareness at the grass route level. The aim being to motivate other Districts to adopt this organisation.

The State Government will be represented by Shri KK Sinha Principal Secretary Revenue and Disaster Management along with his colleagues from the Irrigation and Health Departments. Commissioners from Azamgarh, Basti, Devipattan and Gorakhpur with respective District Magistrates will discuss the Challenges and Vulnerabilities of their specific jurisdictions.

The Vice Chairman will also visit the flood affected areas in Gorakhpur on 5 August at 5PM and the BRD Medical College and Hospital on 6th August at 9 AM. The workshop will close with an interaction with the elected representatives of the people, non officials and members of the media at 5PM.

.